

Basket Weavers

The basket weavers were responsible for providing baskets for various uses at the Adobe.

Each student is to provide one complete and usable basket

References: Basic Basketry with Coiling and Twining by Anonymous
Basketry-Step by Step by Barbara Maynard
Weaving with Reeds and Fibers by Tod and Benson

LOCAL PLANTS USED IN NATIVE AMERICAN BASKETRY:

BULRUSH-common in damp places, especially in marshes or near streams. The brown root grows very long under the ground. Bulrush can grow up to 9 feet above ground.

RED BUD-is a large shrub or tree, 8 to 15 feet tall and grows in the dryer areas of the coastal ranges or in the foothills in the Sierra's. This reddish colored twig is best cut in the fall.

WILLOW-found growing along stream banks. After the bark is peeled off the wood can vary in color from gray to white. The twigs should be cut in early spring or in late fall.

WOOLLY SEDGE-most sedge grasses have roots that are useable for basket weaving. Found in damp sandy soil near streams and marshes.

OTHER MATERIALS USED: pine needles, cedar, walnut, fern roots, bear grass (also known as squaw grass or deer grass).

Basket Making Station

Materials Needed: (*Provided by Park)

- * Two galvanized wash tubs, from now on “tubs”
 - * #2 Reed small, from now on “weavers”
 - * #4 Reed large, from now on “spokes”
 - * Clippers
- Masking Tape (the class needs to provide this)
Pens (the class needs to provide these)



The #2 Weavers are on the left, the #4 Spokes are on the right

Station Set-up:

1. Set up tubs and reed
2. The tubs will be in the ELP Supply Room by the workbench. They are labeled, “Only Baskets”.
3. Take both tubs outside. If it is good weather, place them under the Walnut Tree near the roped off section. If it is raining, the tubs can be placed in the alcove near the gate entrance to the courtyard and stairs.
4. Fill the tubs with water
5. Place the #2 Reed (weavers) in one tub and the #4 Reed (spokes) in the other.

Station:

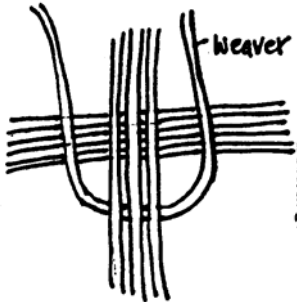
1. Take six of the spokes for each worker
2. Hold these in a “plus” sign pattern with three reeds going horizontally and three vertically.
3. Now, take a long weaver and fold it in half
4. Loop the folded center of the weaver over one arm of the plus sign, begin weaving by keeping the weavers together and alternating over each set of spokes.
5. On the next arm, alternate the weavers so that they are under the next set of spokes.
6. Continue all the way around the base until you have gone three complete rotations
7. Now it is time to go between each spoke.
8. Split the weaver so one goes under and one goes over each spoke of the basket. This will become the frame of the basket. Continue the alternating pattern of over and under, (but now between each spoke) remember to pull as tightly as possible without breaking the reed.
9. Once the basket has reached desired base proportions, begin to create the sides by holding the basket against the body as you weave. Try to cup the base with one hand while the other hand guides the weavers
10. Continue this pattern until basket is complete
11. When it is necessary to add new reeds, simply take a new weaver from the tub and fold it in half and continue the pattern. The loose ends can be ignored or stuck inside the woven pattern
12. When basket weaving is complete, finish the top by bending remaining spokes over to adjacent hole. This will create a looped top pattern. Or, you can cut the tops off when the basket is dry.
13. If the basket is done, the students can put them in their bags. If they are not done and they have the option to work on them later, tape a piece of masking tape to one of the spokes with their name on it.

***It is very important to keep the basket soaked through the basket making session. If the reeds dry out they will break.**

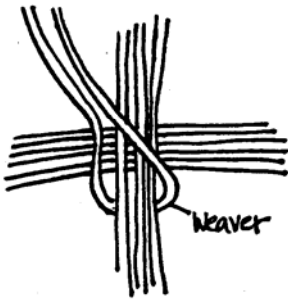
BASKET WEAVING



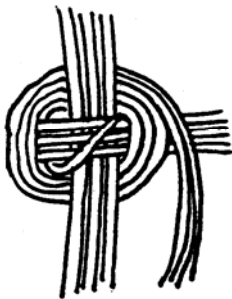
TO BEGIN: MAKE TWO GROUPS OF REEDS
[3 EACH] LAID FLAT AGAINST EACH
OTHER.



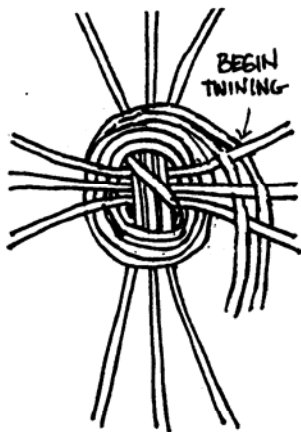
THE TWO GROUPS ARE LAID AT RIGHT
ANGLES TO EACH OTHER AND BOUND WITH
A WEAVER [WEFT].



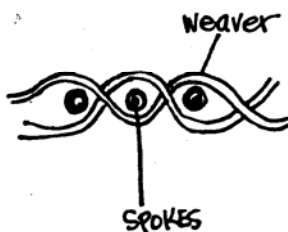
TO START THE WEAVER, BEND IT IN HALF
AND LOOP IT AROUND ONE GROUP, THEN
BRING IT TO THE OPPOSITE SIDE.



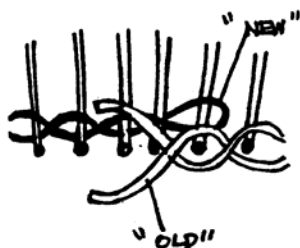
USING THE DOUBLED WEAVER, BEGIN AN
OVER-UNDER PATTERN AROUND THE GROUPS
FOR THREE REVELUTIONS.



AFTER COMPLETING THAT, SPREAD THE SPOKES [WARP]. SEPARATE THE TWO PARTS OF THE WEAVER AND BEGIN A TWINING PATTERN.



A TWINING PATTERN IS WHEN ONE WEAVER GOES OVER AND THE OTHER WEAVER GOES UNDER SIMULTANEOUSLY.



TO ADD MORE WEFT: WHEN YOU GET CLOSE TO THE END OF THE WEAVER, GET ANOTHER, BENDING IT IN HALF AND LOOPING AROUND A SPOKE [WARP] BEFORE THE END OF THE 'OLD' WEAVER. CONTINUE TWINING WITH THE 'NEW' WEAVER, AND TUCK THE ENDS OF THE 'OLD' WEAVER INTO THE BASKET WEAVE [WEFT].



TO FINISH: THE 'SPOKES' [WARP] CAN BE RETURNED ON THEMSELVES AND PRESSED INTO THE WARP.

Station Clean-up:

1. When the basket making is completed, dump out both of the tubs. Please remember to dump the water away from the building. (If possible, on a rainy day, drag them as far as possible from the building.)
2. If there is leftover reed, spread it out on the table next to the gate entrance to the courtyard or on the cooking tables. The reed must be spread out so that it can dry; this is to prevent mildew.
3. The tubs can be left to air dry outside or wiped dry with a towel.
4. When the tubs are completely dry they need to be returned to the ELP supply room.
5. The tubs can be placed one inside the other. Then, place them next to the workbench.
6. The staff person on Wednesday will check to make sure that all items are properly returned to their place.
7. The clippers and station manual should be returned to the top of the black chest of drawers in the ELP supply room.